BEING THE BEST

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

CORPORATE HUMAN RESOURCE PLAN

2007/08 – 2009/10

BRITISH COLUMBIA
BC Public Service

Where ideas work

Five of the Many Reasons
to Work for the BC Public Service

1) **The Pacific Leaders Program:** forgiveness of employees' BC Student Loans, scholarships for employees and their children, and graduate fellowships to attract talented new employees.

2) **A lifetime of career opportunities in one employer:** 200 different jobs in 280 communities working for the largest employer in the province.

3) **One of BC's Top 40 Employers:** recognized for a competitive benefits and pension package, among many other advantages.

4) **An employer Where Ideas Work:** a comprehensive employee recognition program that reflects the value of employees' ideas and ingenuity.

5) **This plan:** recognized for a commitment to transform the BC Public Service as an employer that is unmatched by any other public service in Canada.

Need more reasons?
You'll find them inside this plan and online at **employment.gov.bc.ca**.

Foreword from the Deputy Minister to the Premier Head of the BC Public Service

Since we released the first edition of Being the Best a year ago, one fundamental question has guided each decision we have made as an employer: "Will this make the BC Public Service the best public service employer in Canada?" That is the core idea at the heart of Being the Best, our Corporate Human Resources Plan, and it is also more complex and more important for all British Columbians than it might at first appear.

Yes, to be the best employer we need to offer our employees the support, recognition, and opportunities they need and deserve to pursue their professional goals. But to be the best public service employer in Canada requires us to do more than that because we carry a unique responsibility to the people we serve. Unlike our private-sector competitors, our work is not driven by a single bottom line. Our purpose is to support the administration in meeting British Columbia's social, environmental and economic goals – and to do that to the highest professional and ethical standards.

We are fundamentally changing how the BC Public Service is seen and sees itself as an employer. We have made significant progress since releasing this plan one year ago. Employee engagement, which is deeply linked to productivity and performance, showed a major improvement. The BC Public Service has also been named one of the Top 40 Employers in British Columbia. Those are encouraging measures of our progress, but there is much more to come and this updated edition of Being the Best sets the foundation for the year ahead.

This plan is a statement of the employer we are and the employer we continue striving to be: dynamic, flexible, innovative and responsive to our employees, to the world around us, and most of all to the people we serve. Where we have achieved the goals we set for ourselves, our focus now is to uphold and sustain that success. Where there is still work to be done, we will pursue success with all the ingenuity, passion and skill that lie at the heart of today's BC Public Service.

We are entering what has been described as potentially "the most dynamic period in the history of the public service" in British Columbia. Ultimately it will be each of us in the BC Public Service who decides whether or not that is true over the next decade. I believe it is. I believe the BC Public Service is a more dynamic and rewarding place to work than ever before. Over the coming year, we will all have the chance to prove that – to British Columbians and to ourselves.

Jessica McDonald
Deputy Minister to the Premier and Head of the BC Public Service

Back row:
James Gorman, *Public Service Agency;* **Gord Macatee,** *Health;* **Cairine MacDonald,** *Employment and Income Assistance;* **Robin Ciceri,** *Small Business and Revenue;* **Emery Dosdall,** *Education;* **Allan Seckel,** *Attorney General*

Middle:
Graham Whitmarsh, *Climate Action Secretariat;* **Rob Lapper,** *Intergovernmental Relations;* **Annette Antoniak,** *BC Olympic Games Secretariat;* **Mike Lambert,** *Integrated Land Management Bureau;* **Lori Wanamaker,** *Labour and Citizens' Services;* **Beth James,** *Revenue Solutions;* **Linda Morris,** *Public Affairs Bureau;* **Lorne Brownsey,** *Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation;* **Paul Straszak,** *Labour;* **David Morhart,** *Solicitor General,* **Wes Shoemaker,** *Emergency Management;* **Larry Pedersen,** *Agriculture and Lands;* **Jessica McDonald,** *Deputy Minister to the Premier and Cabinet Secretary;* **John Dyble,** *Transportation;* **Moura Quayle,** *Advanced Education.*

Front:
Chris Trumpy, *Finance;* **Doug Konkin,** *Forests and Range*

Missing from photo:
Lesley du Toit, *Children and Family Development;* **Don Fast,** *Economic Development;* **Mary Freeman,** *Office of Housing and Construction Standards;* **Joan Hesketh,** *Environment* **Bruce Okabe,** *Tourism Sport and the Arts;* **Greg Reimer,** *Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources;* **Sheila Wynn,** *Community Services.*

Message from the Deputy Ministers

Being the Best was the first Corporate Human Resources Plan in the history of the BC Public Service, so for us it marked a profound departure from our past approach of dealing with most human resource issues at the ministry level. As we release this second edition of Being the Best, it is a reminder for us and for all employees that we are all part of one organization. We may lead different ministries, each with different priorities and obligations. But ultimately we are bound by the singular commitment of the BC Public Service to the people of our province, and that obligation supersedes all others.

Changing how we work as an employer is not easy when you have 30,000 employees delivering on more than two dozen different lines of business. But clearly the need to change is far more compelling than the challenge of making that change. We are faced with the same demographic and labour market shifts as the private sector in the decade ahead, and we know that standing still is not an option.

All government ministries have their own workforce plans that reflect each ministry's unique requirements and priorities. But our success at the ministry level depends on a united effort to strengthen the overall competitiveness of the BC Public Service as the dynamic and rewarding employer that makes us proud. That is why Being the Best is so essential – it provides the unifying corporate direction to shape the future of the BC Public Service as not just a good employer but as a leading employer that values and recognizes the contributions made by the employees of a professional BC Public Service.

We welcome the challenge of making the BC Public Service the recognized best public service employer in Canada by 2008. We have been inspired by the positive response of employees over the year since we released the first edition of this plan. And we look forward to your continued input into the steps we can take to achieve that goal of ensuring the BC Public Service truly is a place where ideas work.

Deputy Ministers' Council

Goal 1

Building Our Internal Capacity

Investing in our people by promoting mobility and new work experiences, supporting employee learning and career development, more carefully managing the use of external resources, developing expertise in specific priority job streams, and creating more entry level positions for the next generation of career public service employees.

Building Our Internal Capacity

What It Means

Today's BC Public Service is an employer where:

Employee training and learning goals are supported through the Pacific Leaders employee scholarship program.

Career advancement opportunities are available, with almost 3,000 permanent promotions supported in the 2006-07 fiscal year – a 43 per cent increase from the previous year.

Unique experience-building opportunities are offered, such as the CUSO partnership that allows employees to take a leave of absence to serve with CUSO for up to two years while receiving benefits coverage and a job placement upon their return.

Future workforce needs are addressed by recruiting 75 per cent more employees under age 30 into the BC Public Service in 2006-07 compared with the previous year.

Career goals are supported with new training programs in areas such as coaching skills, procurement and contract management, and expanded leadership training opportunities are offered in regional centres, including Kamloops, Prince George and Fort St. John.

Employee expertise is used before engaging external consultants, with savings redirected to support job and training opportunities in the public service.

New employees are prepared for success with a government-wide orientation program and oath ceremony designed to offer a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the public service.

Expanded career options are available to employees as we promote greater mobility between ministries.

Experienced employees who wish to continue working past 65 have the opportunity to do so.

Ministry workforce plans are used to plan for the future by identifying areas requiring improved training and career development programs.

Fran, *Project Manager*

Building Our Internal Capacity

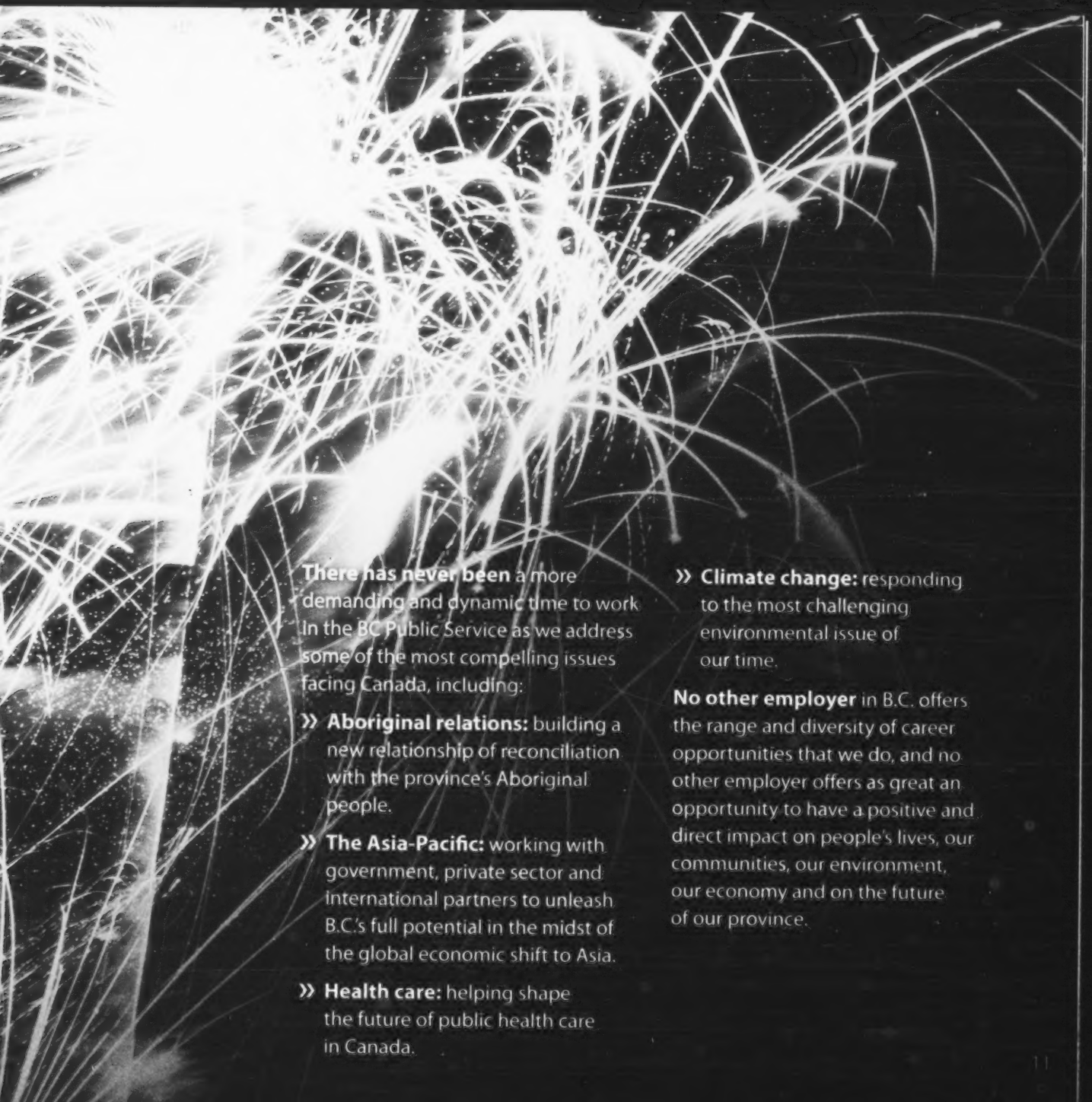
What You Should Notice Next

To continue building our internal capacity, the BC Public Service will:

- Act to ensure auxiliary appointments are used as they should be – to meet short-term requirements – and that auxiliary employees have greater opportunities to achieve regular status.
- Deliver new programs and resources to support managers and supervisors, recognizing their vital role in the success of employee engagement.
- Expand workplace wellness initiatives to build on the introduction of discount fitness memberships, online fitness tracking tools and smoking cessation supports for employees.
- Consider more flexible benefits options.
- Explore flexibility in pensions to reflect the elimination of mandatory retirement and support those who choose to continue working in the BC Public Service.
- Provide more training opportunities in regional centres.
- Develop ways for employees to more easily match career paths with their skills and training opportunities.

The BC Public Service
Make an Impact

Today's BC Public Service includes about 30,000 dedicated professionals working in 280 communities across the province to deliver programs and services British Columbians depend on every day. The great diversity of those programs and services is reflected in the more than 200 different types of jobs performed by BC Public Service employees.



There has never been a more demanding and dynamic time to work in the BC Public Service as we address some of the most compelling issues facing Canada, including:

- **Aboriginal relations:** building a new relationship of reconciliation with the province's Aboriginal people.
- **The Asia-Pacific:** working with government, private sector and international partners to unleash B.C.'s full potential in the midst of the global economic shift to Asia.
- **Health care:** helping shape the future of public health care in Canada.
- **Climate change:** responding to the most challenging environmental issue of our time.

No other employer in B.C. offers the range and diversity of career opportunities that we do, and no other employer offers as great an opportunity to have a positive and direct impact on people's lives, our communities, our environment, our economy and on the future of our province.

Greg and Monica, *Corrections Officers*

Goal 2

Improving Our Competitiveness

Establishing a strong profile for the BC Public Service as a competitive and attractive employer, by increasing our marketing and recruitment efforts, opening all job competitions to external candidates, modernizing hiring practices, establishing competitive employment packages and forming new partnerships with post-secondary institutions and other employers.

Improving Our Competitiveness

What It Means

Today's BC Public Service is an employer where:

Diverse career opportunities and a competitive benefits package ensure we can compete in a strong labour market, with recognition as one of BC's Top 40 Employers.

Unique benefits are offered, like the forgiveness of BC Student Loans, scholarships up to $7,500 for employees, graduate fellowships of $20,000, and scholarships of $2,500 for children of BC Public Service employees.

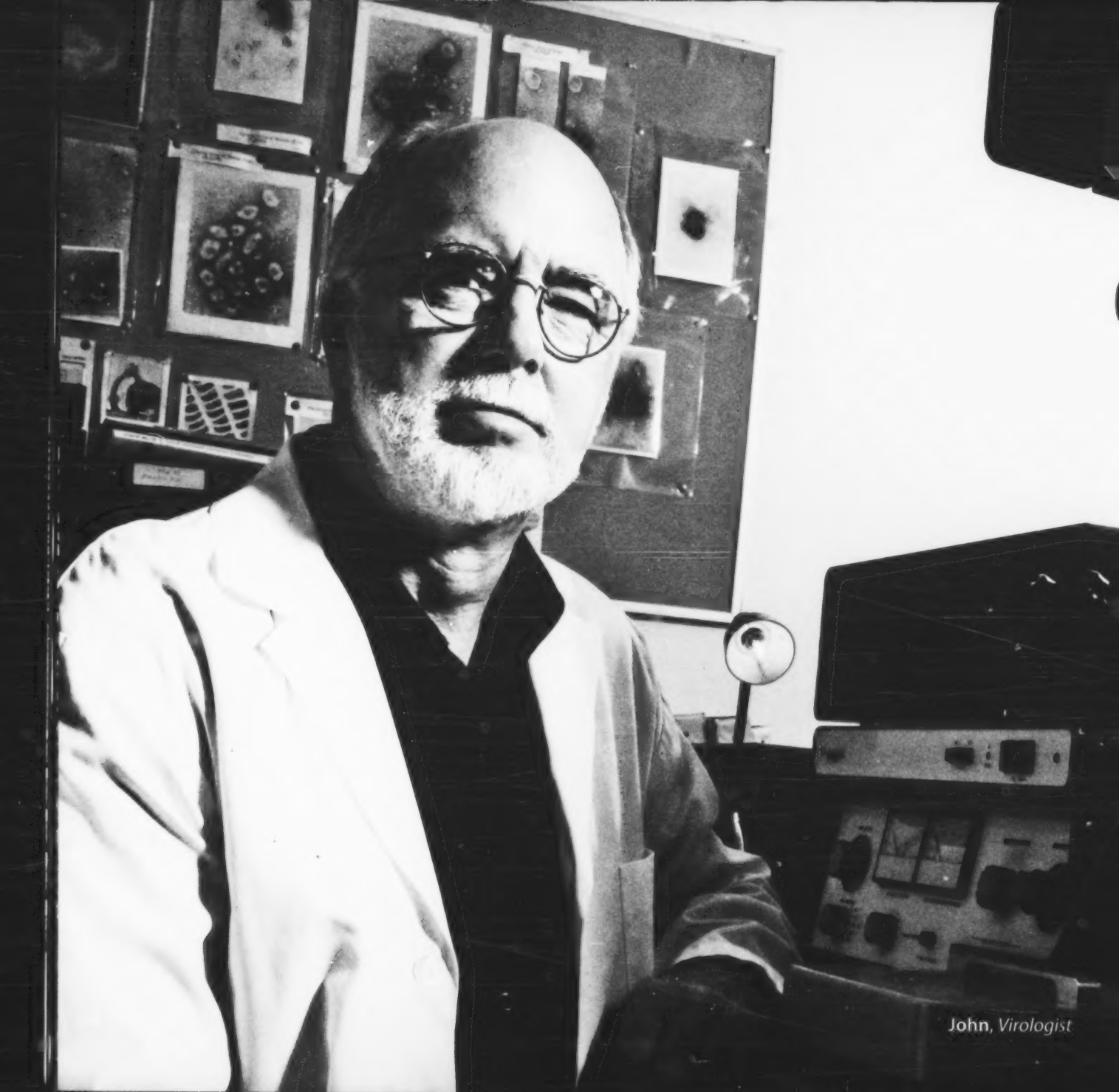
New, skilled employees are attracted through a comprehensive corporate recruitment strategy that generated nearly four times as many job applications last year as were received in previous years.

Merit-based hiring and career development are promoted while opening all job opportunities to external as well as internal candidates, with the vast majority of competitions won by internal candidates last year.

"Where Ideas Work" is the corporate brand, reflecting a commitment to employee ingenuity, innovation and ideas.

Co-op students and interns are introduced to careers in the BC Public Service, with the launch of a new Aboriginal Internship Program and the hiring of 474 co-op students last fiscal year – up from 414 the year before.

An improved job opportunities website (www.employment.gov.bc.ca) includes detailed job postings and information on career paths within the BC Public Service.



John, *Virologist*

Improving Our Competitiveness

What You Should Notice Next

To continue improving our competitiveness, the BC Public Service will:

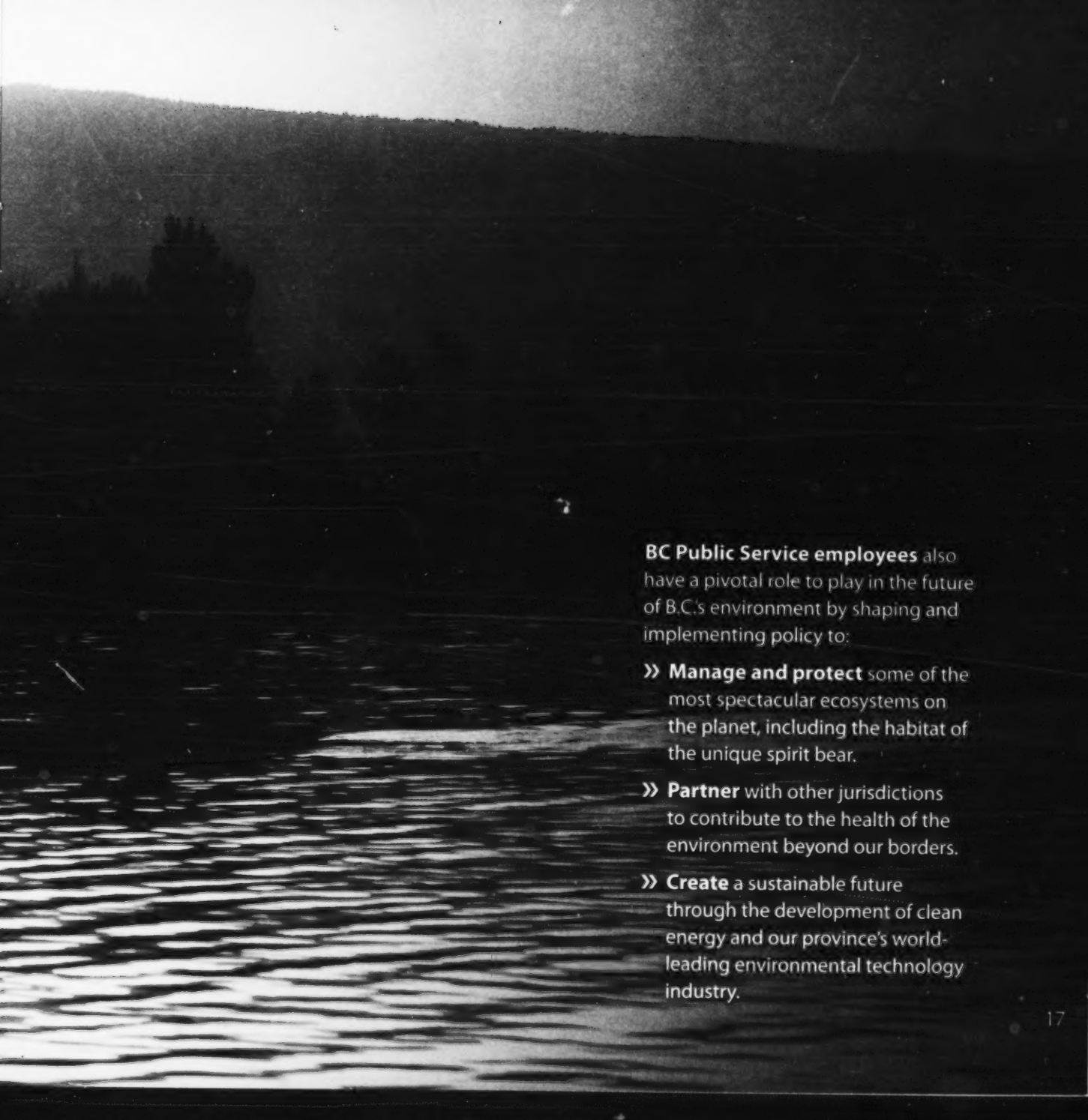
- Expand efforts to attract new employees with aggressive campus recruitment campaigns and a more prominent corporate advertising program to raise the profile of current job opportunities.
- Reduce hiring times by moving toward a corporate hiring policy and away from a vacancy-by-vacancy only approach.
- Improve the job opportunities website further to make it easier for applicants to match their résumés to job postings.
- Integrate the Where Ideas Work brand more deeply as part of a cultural change that builds a sense of community among the BC Public Service.

The BC Public Service
A Green Employer

Climate change is the most challenging issue facing Canada and the world, and the BC Public Service and its employees are at the forefront of climate action with commitments to:

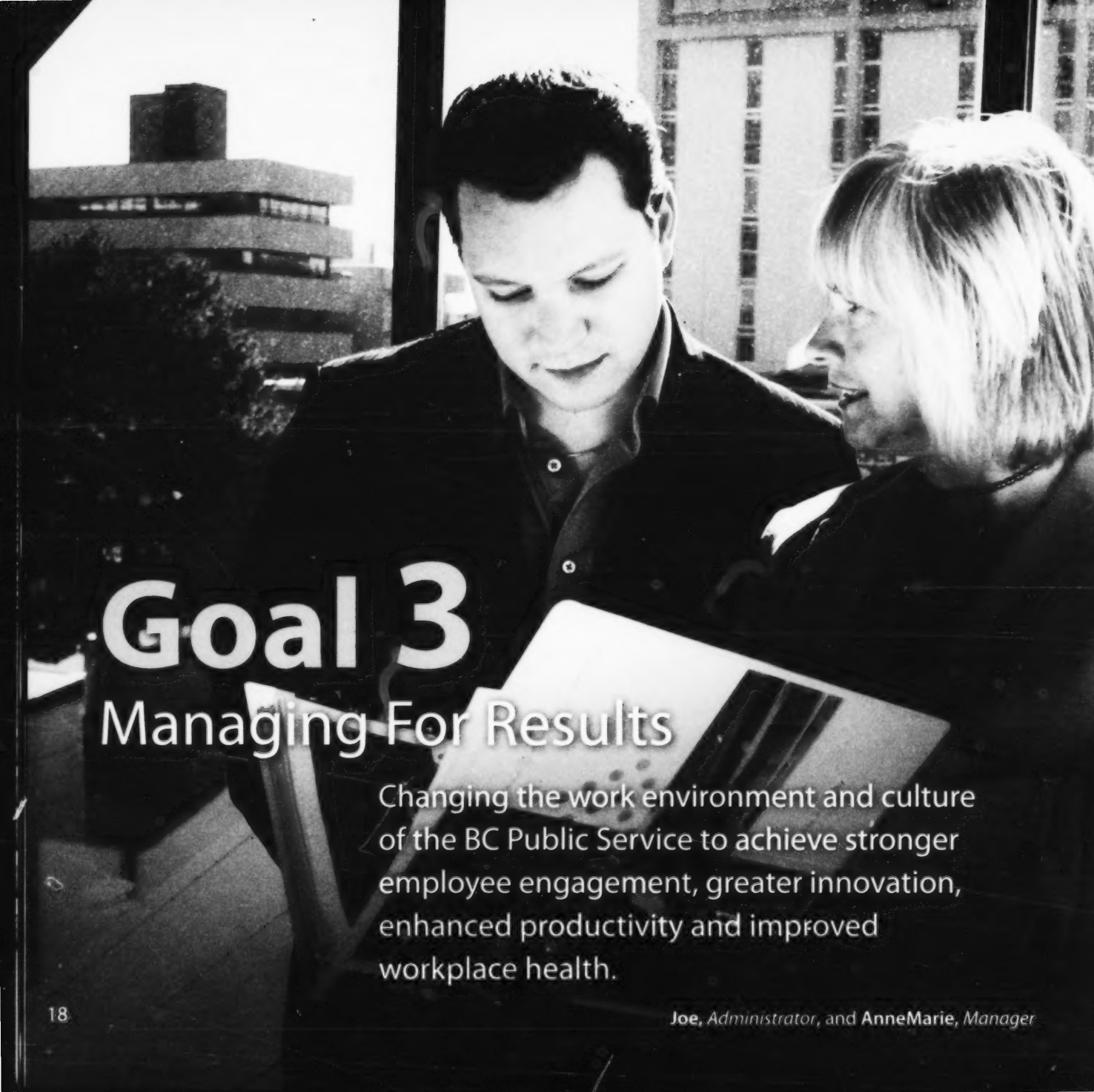
- **Implement** one of North America's most aggressive climate action strategies, which will see B.C. reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by one third by 2020.
- **Establish** the BC Public Service as a carbon neutral employer by 2010 by applying the ideas employees contribute through initiatives like the Green Ideas Shine awards program.

GREEN IDEAS SHINE



BC Public Service employees also have a pivotal role to play in the future of B.C.'s environment by shaping and implementing policy to:

- **Manage and protect** some of the most spectacular ecosystems on the planet, including the habitat of the unique spirit bear.
- **Partner** with other jurisdictions to contribute to the health of the environment beyond our borders.
- **Create** a sustainable future through the development of clean energy and our province's world-leading environmental technology industry.



Goal 3

Managing For Results

Changing the work environment and culture of the BC Public Service to achieve stronger employee engagement, greater innovation, enhanced productivity and improved workplace health.

Joe, *Administrator*, and **AnneMarie,** *Manager*

Managing For Results

What It Means

Today's BC Public Service is an employer where:

Employee engagement is valued as a fundamental indicator of our success as an employer, achieving a significant five-point increase in corporate engagement in the 2007 Work Environment Survey with a participation rate of 70 per cent.

Employee development is supported by the commitment that every employee - without exception - will have an individualized performance plan and a constructive annual evaluation, with that goal integrated into the performance plan for every Deputy and Assistant Deputy Minister.

A sense of pride and community is built across the BC Public Service through an effective communications strategy built around an award-winning employee intranet site (https://gww.gov.bc.ca).

Online polls and other feedback tools allow employees to share their views and ideas on the Corporate HR Plan and on-the-ground work issues such as work-life balance, management practices, work processes and training and development opportunities.

Employee health and fitness are supported with programs such as the BC Public Service Torch Relay online fitness tracking system, support for smoking cessation for employees and their families, and access to discounts on fitness memberships and equipment.

Priorities identified by employees in the annual Work Environment Survey are acted on.

Employee success is celebrated with an expanded employee recognition program.

Recognition of employees by outside agencies is promoted by helping teams and individuals participate in third-party awards programs through a new online awards catalogue.

Employee ideas to improve government processes are rewarded through the Ideas Shine improvement awards program.

Rachel and Erik, *Public Affairs Officers*

- **Learning seminars** are offered to engage employees in cross-government priorities such as building a new relationship with Aboriginal people and achieving the goal of being a carbon-neutral employer.
- **Employee feedback** to leadership is encouraged through tools on the employee intranet, the annual Work Environment Survey and Jessica McDonald's visits with staff around the province.

Managing For Results

What You Should Notice Next

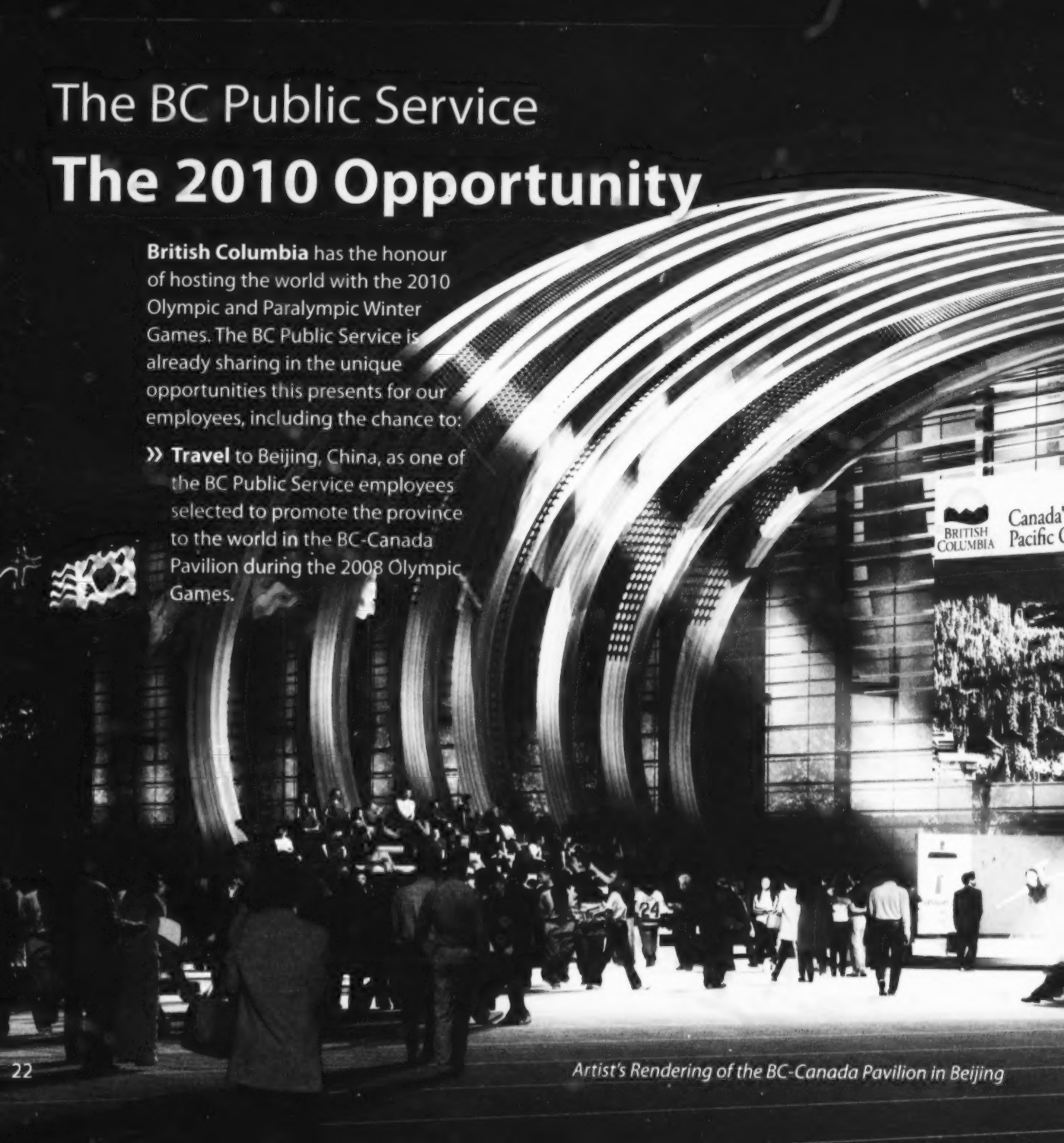
To continue managing for results, the BC Public Service will:

- Encourage and recognize employee innovation at all levels of the public service.
- Apply employee ideas to reduce cumbersome work processes and improve productivity.
- Focus on working with employees to address stress and workload in departments where those are significant issues.
- Introduce a new set of performance values that define how we work as professional public servants.
- Expand the Premier's Innovation and Excellence Awards to include events in all regions of the province.

The BC Public Service
The 2010 Opportunity

British Columbia has the honour of hosting the world with the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. The BC Public Service is already sharing in the unique opportunities this presents for our employees, including the chance to:

» **Travel** to Beijing, China, as one of the BC Public Service employees selected to promote the province to the world in the BC-Canada Pavilion during the 2008 Olympic Games.



Artist's Rendering of the BC-Canada Pavilion in Beijing

» **Build** the economic and social legacy of the Games across British Columbia by working with the B.C. 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Secretariat.

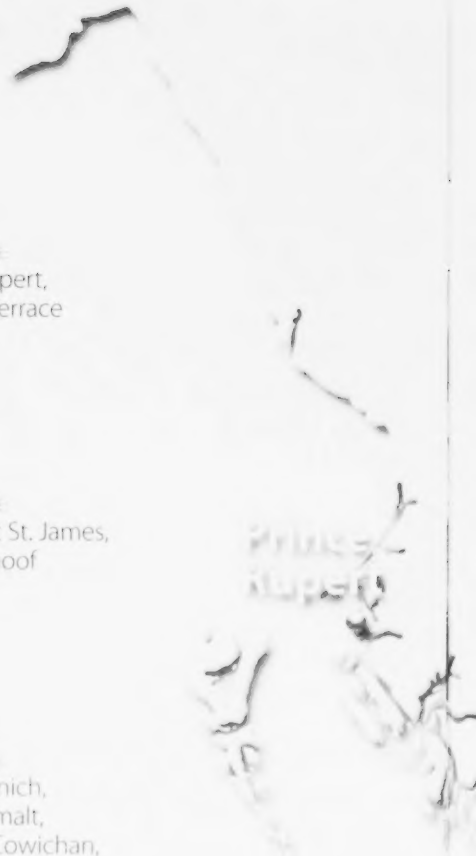
» **Access** dedicated volunteer opportunities available to BC Public Service employees during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

» **Participate** in the torch relay for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in one of several relay spots made available to BC Public Service employees.

» **Support** Canada's athletes through the Own the Podium program by purchasing exclusive gear available to BC Public Service employees.

The BC Public Service

Where We Work



REGION:
NORTH COAST

COMMUNITIES WHERE WE WORK INCLUDE:
Hazelton, Kitimat, Prince Rupert, Queen Charlotte, Stewart, Terrace

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES:
472

REGION:
NECHAKO

COMMUNITIES WHERE WE WORK INCLUDE:
Burns Lake, Fraser Lake, Fort St. James, Houston, Smithers, Vanderhoof

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES:
612

REGION:
VANCOUVER ISLAND

COMMUNITIES WHERE WE WORK INCLUDE:
Campbell River, Central Saanich, Colwood, Courtenay, Esquimalt, Langford, Nanaimo, North Cowichan, Oak Bay, Port Alberni, Saanich, Victoria

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES:
13,479

REGION:
LOWER MAINLAND

COMMUNITIES WHERE WE WORK INCLUDE:
Abbotsford, Burnaby, Chilliwack, Coquitlam, Cultus Lake, Delta, Hope, Langley, Maple Ridge, Mission, New Westminster, North Vancouver, Pemberton, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Richmond, Sardis, Sechelt, Squamish, Surrey, Vancouver, White Rock

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES:
9,685

REGION:
NORTHEAST
COMMUNITIES WHERE WE WORK INCLUDE:
Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort Nelson, Fort St, John
PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES:
453

REGION:
CARIBOO
COMMUNITIES WHERE WE WORK INCLUDE:
100 Mile House, Alexis Creek, MacKenzie, Prince George, Quesnel, Williams Lake
PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES:
2,004

REGION:
THOMPSON-OKANAGAN
COMMUNITIES WHERE WE WORK INCLUDE:
Ashcroft, Clearwater, Golden, Grand Forks, Kamloops, Kelowna, Merritt, Penticton. Princeton, Revelstoke, Rossland, Salmon Arm, Trail, Vernon
PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES:
3,005

REGION:
KOOTENAY
COMMUNITIES WHERE WE WORK INCLUDE:
Castlegar, Cranbrook, Creston, Invermere, Kootenay Lake, Nakusp, Nelson, Yahk
PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES:
940

One of the primary goals of Being the Best is to generate dialogue among employees in the BC Public Service about our future and the changes we need to make to be a more attractive, competitive and responsive employer. The first edition of this plan in 2006 clearly achieved that goal, generating feedback from hundreds of employees through meetings, the employee intranet and the Public Service Agency website.

Many employees observed how the changes underway have already had a positive impact in their ministry or work environment. Some related how their initial scepticism about Being the Best has gradually shifted as they began to see the concrete actions that have followed the plan. In other instances, some employees also expressed frustration with particular challenges in their own ministry or work unit, as well as with corporate policies they feel continue to impede career development and satisfaction.

That employees felt comfortable sharing those views – whether supportive or challenging – is encouraging, and all the opinions and ideas put forward are considered according to their merits. Several specific areas requiring continued work stood out in the feedback received. The ability to communicate what is happening consistently and clearly across such a large organization all across the province remains a challenge.

Many employees expressed continued frustration with the hiring process and obstacles to advancement. Others are frustrated that performance reviews are too often not treated as the constructive tool they should be in helping chart and pursue a career path. The annual Work Environment Survey results also identify other areas that remain challenges across the BC Public Service.

The participation of all employees is essential to the continued success of the transformation now underway in the BC Public Service. You can take part in achieving and upholding the goals identified in this plan by:

- **Learning** how the goals in Being the Best are being acted on in your ministry. You can find that information in your ministry's workforce plan.
- **Sharing** your ideas for what we can improve next. Submit your suggestions to your Deputy Minister, or use the feedback options on the employee intranet at https://gww.gov.bc.ca
- **Exploring** the new tools and initiatives being introduced to support you and your career. You can find information on these as they are announced on the employee intranet.
- **Giving** some thought to your role in the organization and how your work contributes to the results government is trying to achieve. Talk with your colleagues about new and creative ideas for how we can all work to be a more competitive, responsive and productive employer.

Whether or not you are currently working in the BC Public Service, if you are interested in the wide range of career opportunities available, visit employment.gov.bc.ca for more information.

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www.employment.gov.bc.ca